

**Amendments to the Abstract:**

Please amend the Abstract at page 16, lines 1-12 as follows:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and an apparatus for encoding/decoding RS (Reed-Solomon) code using a binary equivalence method of bit level comprises: . The apparatus includes a binary conversion unit for ~~conversion-converting~~ non-binary symbols outputted from a source information inputting unit into binary symbols and getting bit level RS code using a binary equivalence of the RS code; a, an encoding unit for generating row and column vectors using the bit level RS code as a component code; and a decoding unit for decoding the row and column vectors using the binary equivalence of the RS code for the bit level RS sequence; ~~whereby branch complexity is reduced than a case of using non-binary symbols, and the size of the interleaver is greatly enlarged in bit~~ level.